

CALIFORNIA VEHICLE RESTRAINT LAWS

All vehicles except buses and motorcycles

INFANTS AND SMALL CHILDREN

V.C. 27360(a) Cite parent/guardian for each child who is not properly restrained in the rear seat unless the child is six years or older or weighs 60 pounds or more.

V.C. 27360(b) Cite driver only if parent is not present.

Exceptions:

1. Court sanctioned exemption, medical condition, physical unfitness or size.
2. Life threatening emergency or transported in authorized emergency vehicle.
3. Child over 40 pounds in rear seat of vehicle with lap belts only.

As of January 1, 2005, each child is required to be properly restrained in the back seat unless child is six years or older or weighs 60 pounds or more.

Exceptions: V.C. 27360(c) a child or ward under the age of six years who weighs less than 60 pounds may ride in the front seat of a motor vehicle, if properly secured in a Child Passenger Restraint System (CPRS) that meets applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards, under the following circumstances:

- A. There is no rear seat.
 - B. The rear seats are side-facing jump seats.
 - C. The rear seats are rear-facing seats.
 - D. The Child Passenger Restraint System cannot be installed properly in the rear seat.
 - E. All rear seats are already occupied by children under the age of 12 years.
 - F. Medical reasons necessitate that the child or ward not ride in the rear seat.
- The court may require satisfactory proof of the child's medical condition.

A child may NOT ride in the front seat with an active passenger airbag if:

- A. Under one year of age.
- B. Weighs less than 20 pounds.
- C. Riding in a rear-facing Child Passenger Restraint System.

OTHER OCCUPANTS

V.C. 27360.5(a) Cite parent/guardian for each child who is unrestrained and is 6 years of age but less than 16, or is less than 6 years and weighs 60 lbs. or more.

V.C. 27360.5(b) Same as above but cite driver only if parent is not present.

V.C. 27315(d) Cite driver for self and all passengers 16 or older not properly secured in a safety belt.

V.C. 27315(e) Also cite each passenger 16 or older not properly secured in safety belt.

V.C. 27315(f) Cite registered owner if safety belts have been removed or not working.

Exceptions: Taxi driver on city street w/fare-paying passenger, back seat of limousine and taxi cabs for hire, sleeper berth, newspaper delivery, rural mail carriers, solid waste/recycled collections, physically disabling or medical condition: duly certified by physician, surgeon or chiropractor, must state condition and reason.

PICKUP LAW

V.C. 23116 Cite driver (a) and/or persons (b) riding unrestrained in or on the back of pickup truck or flatbed.

UNATTENDED CHILD IN A MOTOR VEHICLE

V.C. 15620(a) A person responsible for a child age 6 or under may not leave the child inside a vehicle without a person who is at least 12 yrs. of age if there are conditions that present a significant risk to child's health or safety or engine is running and/or keys are in the ignition.

4 STEPS FOR KIDS

Cite parent/guardian for each child who is not properly restrained in the rear seat unless the child is six years or older or weighs 60 pounds or more

Step 1 INFANTS — REAR-FACING SEATS

- Newborn to at least 1-year-old and over 20 pounds.
- Ride rear-facing in the back seat
- Seat is reclined far enough so baby's head doesn't flop forward — do not recline seat more than 45 degrees.
- Shoulder harness is snug and flat.
- Seat is attached tightly with vehicle belt.



Step 2 TODDLERS — FORWARD FACING SEATS

- One-year-old and over 20 pounds to about 4-years-old or 40 pounds.
- Forward-facing in the back seat.
- Seat has shoulder harness.
- Shoulder harness is snug and flat.
- Seat is in an upright position.
- Seat is attached tightly with vehicle belt.



Step 3 PRE-SCHOOL — BOOSTER SEATS

- For children over 40 pounds.
- Booster seat in the back seat.
- Must be used with lap and shoulder belts.
- Lap belt fits low and snug against the hips.
- Shoulder belt crosses the collar-bone and center of chest.



Step 4 BIG KIDS — SAFETY BELTS

- Age 6 or older or over 60 pounds, the law.
- Best Practice — Age 8 or older or when:
- Child can sit with back against vehicle seat back.
- Knees bend over the edge of vehicle seat.
- Child can stay in position.
- Lap belt fits low and snug across hips.
- Shoulder belt crosses the collar-bone and center of chest.



NHTSA recommends all children 12 and under should be in the back seat.

A portion of fines collected for these citations are used to provide education and child restraints to low income families



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